

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 EB-08 L-03
TRSE-00 AF-10 ARA-10 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 OMB-01 HA-05 DOE-11 SOE-02
STR-07 SIL-01 LAB-04 /157 W
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R 302029Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5005
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
USMISSION USUN
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 02880

USEEC

USMTN

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, UN, FR
SUBJECT: UN OVERVIEW -- FRENCH POSITION

REF: STATE 017255

1. SUMMARY: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AT QUAI AND
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF UN ECONOMIC AFFAIRS REACTED
SYMPATHETICALLY TO PRESENTATION OF U.S. THINKING
ABOUT OVERVIEW MECHANISM AS PER REFTEL. THEY HAVE
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PROMISED A MORE CONSIDERED REACTION AFTER HAVING
STUDIED THE "NON-PAPER" SUMMARIZING THE U.S. POSITION.

2. ON JANUARY 30, THE EMBASSY'S ECONOMIC MINISTER
CONVEYED TO FROMENT-MEURICE, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AND
FINANCIAL AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, A
"NON-PAPER" EMBODYING THE U.S. POSITION PER REFTEL.

WE GAVE A COPY SEPARATELY TO ARIOLA, A NEW OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC QUESTIONS IN THE UN SECTION OF THE QUAI D'ORSAY.

3. FROMENT-MEURICE SAID HE WOULD STUDY OUR POSITION CAREFULLY AND GIVE US A REACTION. BASED ON ECONOMIC MINISTER'S ORAL SUMMARY AND HIS PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH UNDER SECRETARY COOPER, FROMENT-MEURICE THOUGHT THAT FRANCE AND THE U.S. WERE ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH REGARDING MOST OF THE IMPORTANT ASPECTS; E.G., THE OVERVIEW MECHANISM SHOULD NOT BE A NEGOTIATING FORUM; IT SHOULD INITIALLY DRAW IN SUBSTANTIVE OFFICIALS AT THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL; IT SHOULD AVOID DEBATES BASED ON RIGID POSITIONS AND NEGOTIATED RESOLUTIONS; IT SHOULD FOCUS ON OVERALL GLOBAL ISSUES WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE LDCS; THERE SHOULD BE NO ELABORATE SYSTEM OF SUB-GROUPS.

4. WHILE FAVORING THE ABOVE APPROACH, FROMENT-MEURICE WAS FRANKLY SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE CHANCES OF CHANGING LONG-STANDING G-77 AND UN PRACTICES. NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO TRY.

5. WITH REGARD TO THE U.S. DESIRE FOR A STEERING GROUP, FROMENT-MEURICE'S MAIN CONCERN WAS THAT WE NOT PUT THE EC ON THE SPOT. FRANCE WOULD HAVE TO INSIST ON CONFIDENTIAL

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A SEAT FOR ITSELF RATHER THAN ACCEPTING A SINGLE COMMUNITY SPOKESMAN. HE THOUGHT THERE WAS AN OUTSIDE CHANCE THAT A GROUP OF ABOUT 35 COUNTRIES MIGHT PERMIT RESOLUTION OF THE EC REPRESENTATION PROBLEM (THE COUNTRY HAVING THE PRESIDENCY OF THE EC COUNCIL WOULD REPRESENT THE SMALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS). BUT EVEN THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO WORK OUT. WE DID NOT DEBATE THIS POINT WITH HIM PENDING HIS MORE DETAILED STUDY OF OUR POSITION. IN LINE WITH THE REFTEL WE MADE CLEAR THAT OUR VIEWS ARE PRELIMINARY AND THAT WE WOULD APPRECIATE CONSIDERED REACTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS.

6. ARIOLA, WHO REPLACED DEJAMMET A FEW DAYS AGO, SAID HIS OFFICE WAS IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF CONSIDERING THE OVERVIEW MECHANISM. HE FELT THAT ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS CONCERNED PROCEDURE FOR ESTABLISHING AGENDAS FOR SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS. HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO OUR GENERAL APPROACH JUST AS FROMENT-MEURICE IN PARAGRAPH 3, BUT ARIOLA RAISED NO PROBLEM ABOUT SIZE OF STEERING GROUP. HE ALSO PROMISED TO GIVE US HIS REACTIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
HARTMAN

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